

Monday, June 22, 1998 10:30-11:30 a.m., EDT Rail Topic Group conference call

Participants on the call included:

Mike Butler, UETC	Daren Gilbert, State of Nevada
Ray English, DOE-NR	William Naughton, ComEd
Bob Fronczak, AAR	Markus Popa, DOE-OCRWM

The call began with a brief update by Mr. Butler on the status of the two matrices compiled by the Group. Mr. Butler reminded the Group that the matrices are still slated for release to the TEC/WG membership at the July meeting, and stressed that if any outstanding comments remained, they should be forwarded to him immediately. He added that the matrices would be released with the explanatory coversheet drafted by the Group in May, which explains their origin and purpose as well as the fact that they are intended to be "living documents" (as agreed previously by the Group), subject to periodic review and revision as necessary. Mr. English, Mr. Fronczak, and others seconded this approach.

Mr. Butler also informed the Group that he had recently discussed the status of the Enhanced CVSA document with Mr. Jim Daust of CVSA, who informed him that this document (the subject of comparison in the Rail Inspections matrix) is in the process of revision. This may or may not have an effect on the references contained within the Inspections matrix, Mr. Butler said. Group members pointed out that presenting the matrices as "living documents" keeps this from being a problem; the Inspections matrix will be updated to reflect changes in the CVSA document once those changes are available.

The second item discussed on the call was the revamped "Rail Topic Group Issues Timeline." This summary of actions taken on the initial seven issues tasked to the Group was first presented on the previous conference call (May 27), but has since been revised to capture some of the earlier actions which were omitted from that draft. The Group reviewed the document and made a number of slight changes. Mr. Butler suggested presenting this second draft to the TEC/WG membership in July, to summarize the activities of the Group over the last two years. Mr. Naughton and Mr. Fronczak commented that the level of detail contained in Draft #2 might be excessive for the purposes of the general TEC/WG member. Mr. Naughton noted that the initial attempt, if updated to reflect some of the necessary additions, may be more useful in this regard. He cited the relative brevity of that draft and commented that this would increase its value to the more casual observer. The remainder of the Group agreed. Mr. Butler noted that he would still make the longer version available for Rail Topic Group members at their meeting in July, to serve as a historical document particularly for newcomers.

The third item of discussion was the planned review of the WGA WIPP Transportation Safety Program Implementation Guide (WIPP-PIG). It was decided by the Group that the best forum for undertaking this planned review would be in the face-to-face meeting scheduled for July 13 in Milwaukee. Further discussion focused on what the Group's approach to this review would be. Mr. English asserted that any review should be prefaced with a mention of the fundamental

differences between the rail and highway modes. He said that rail is inherently safer because it operates within a closed system, thus supplying a built-in incentive to avoid cost-inducing accidents. He pointed out that an accident in any part of the system impedes traffic throughout the system, a fact that has led the industry and the FRA to devise extremely comprehensive track and inspection safety standards. Mr. Naughton agreed with Mr. English's characterization of these rail-specific safety measures, but stated that it was his impression that a review of this safety document in a rail context would be important to the regional compact organizations who to date have been very supportive of the WIPP model. Mr. English and others agreed that this was a vital aspect supporting the Group's decision to initiate a study of this model. It was decided that the Group would review the WIPP PIG item by item and develop an "appendix" of sorts specific to rail transport. The Group agreed this would be the main agenda item for the meeting of July 13. Mr. Butler told the Group that he would have additional copies of the document available at that time. The call was adjourned at approximately 11:28 a.m. EDT.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 13 from 3:30-6:00 p.m. in the Juno Room of the Milwaukee Hilton, immediately prior to the Summer 1998 TEC/WG meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.